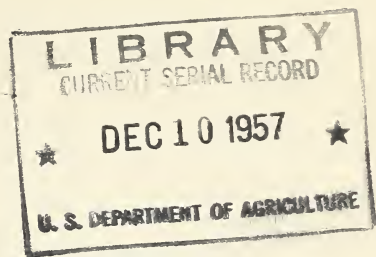


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RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Second Annual Report
of
The Secretary of Agriculture

September 1957

Committee for RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

O. HATFIELD CHILSON, *Under Secretary, Department of the Interior*

TRUE D. MORSE, *Under Secretary, Department of Agriculture (Chairman)*

WALTER WILLIAMS, *Under Secretary, Department of Commerce*

JAMES T. O'CONNELL, *Under Secretary, Department of Labor*

Dr. JOHN A. PERKINS, *Under Secretary, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare*

WENDELL B. BARNES, *Administrator, Small Business Administration*

Dr. JOSEPH S. DAVIS, *Member, Council of Economic Advisers*

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE PRESIDENT,
THE WHITE HOUSE.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

It gives me great satisfaction to transmit this second annual report on the Rural Development Program.

Substantial progress has been made in the program since the last report in September 1956. Six additional States and Puerto Rico have come into the program, making a total of 30 States where the work is going forward. In cooperation with State agencies and personnel, the five Federal departments represented in the program have taken steps to speed and perfect organization and technical assistance to pilot counties and areas. Nearly 100 of these rural counties, in all sections of the nation, are pioneering this new approach to balanced farm, industry and community development.

For those rural people who have the desire and ability to develop an efficient farm unit, there are special adult education projects and technical assistance aimed at their special needs. Vocational training, labor surveys, and industrial development are being emphasized for those who choose nonfarm employment. In many of these pilot areas, projects have also been started leading to improved education, better health and sanitation, and community development.

Summing up the value and importance of this new program, the South Carolina Rural Development Committee has commented, "One of the most valuable elements of the Rural Development Program has been found to be the strength that comes from the combined efforts of farmers, business and civic leaders, and representatives of agencies and organizations working together as a team on county rural development committees. These committees, built around local agricultural, business and civic leaders, are proving to be an effective force in getting programs and activities under way aimed at improving the lot of low-income farm families. (The program) has also been helpful in getting the low-income families to become interested in helping themselves."

This second annual report is clearly a proof of the committee's statement.


As the States move forward with rural development, expanding work into additional counties and, with the assistance of U. S. government agencies, improving operation of the program in rural areas, all Federal departments and agencies will gain a better understanding of development needs in these areas and how best to help local people help themselves.

In this report, for the first time, we have included a reference to those public programs and policies which might profitably be strengthened as a means of providing additional assistance in under-

developed rural areas. An improved awareness of what our departments can do to assist local leaders in reaching goals they themselves decide upon is one of the most important fruits of the Rural Development Program.

On behalf of the Committee for RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, agencies and private organizations directing the program in 30 states, and the more than 1,050 private citizens who are participating as members of local rural development committees, I transmit herewith this second annual report on the Rural Development Program.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Eugene P. Lamon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "E".

Secretary of Agriculture.

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RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

NATIONAL

Committee for RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
 Under Secretary, Department of the Interior
 Under Secretary, Department of Agriculture (Chairman)
 Under Secretary, Department of Commerce
 Under Secretary, Department of Labor
 Under Secretary, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
 Administrator, Small Business Administration
 Member, Council of Economic Advisers

STATE

Rural Development Committee of representatives from --
 Agricultural Extension Service
 Agricultural Experiment Station
 Forest Service (state)
 Farmers Home Administration
 Soil Conservation Service
 Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Committee
 Farm Credit District
 Farm Organizations
 Chamber of Commerce (state)
 Social Security Administration
 Department of Health
 Department of Education
 Employment Security Agency (state)
 Industrial Development Board
 (Other agencies and organizations as appropriate)

LOCAL

County Rural (or Resource) Development Committee
 Farmers
 Businessmen
 Farm organization representatives
 Civic leaders
 Church representatives
 Elected local government officials
 Physicians
 Housewives
 Former Co-op Officials
 News media representatives

Subcommittees for --
 Agriculture
 Industrial Development
 Education
 Health and Welfare
 Community Facilities

Agency Advisory Committee of representatives from --
 County Extension Service
 Soil Conservation Service
 ASC Committee
 Farmers Home Administration
 Production Credit Association
 Vocational Agriculture Department
 Health Department
 Welfare Department
 Employment Security Office
 School Administration
 (Others as appropriate)

Chairman, with advice and assistance of Coordinator for Rural Development Program

Chairman, staff, and steering committee

Chairman, secretary, and steering committee

This is a general outline of program organization; individual states and counties may differ in details.

SUMMARY

The past 12 months have been decisive in establishing an effective pilot Rural Development Program. Now organized in 30 States, from Washington to Florida and from Maine to New Mexico, this new experimental program to encourage and promote balanced farm, industry and community development in low-income rural areas holds great potential for all the Nation.

Projects in farming, industry promotion, education, health, marketing, community improvement that have been started in the pilot areas of the Rural Development Program will have an impact far beyond these areas. These counties and areas are demonstrating methods, organization and services that can be effective in all rural areas. Their experience will help farm, business, educational and government leaders learn more about the complex job of area development, and the role each of them can take in accomplishing this job. Rural development is truly a "demonstration program."

Since our last report, in September 1956, these major actions have been taken, strengthening the Rural Development Program and broadening its scope:

With the recent addition of five States (and Puerto Rico), a total of 30 States have now entered the program by forming "rural development committees" of representatives from farm and non-farm agencies and by establishing organized pilot or demonstration counties.¹

The number of pilot counties increased to nearly 100, if we include those taking part in rural development on a trade area basis.²

By continuing appropriations for the program and urging its expansion, the Congress gave significant endorsement to its aims and objectives.

Former Purdue Dean of Agriculture Harry J. Reed was appointed national coordinator for the Rural Development Program.

Late in August 1956, the Department of Agriculture allocated funds, for the first time, to the States for staffing Rural Development Program positions at State and county levels. Workers have been assigned in pilot counties to increase on-the-farm education; help development committees in their organization and planning; increase soil, water, and forest protection; conduct surveys; and administer credit programs.

An outstanding result to date of the Rural Development Program is the encouragement given local people to take a fresh look at their counties and trade areas and join together to do something about their economic problems.

During the year a series of regional conferences for Federal, State and local government agency workers and private leaders in the Rural Development Program was started, with meetings held at Lexington, Ky., Shreveport, La., and Fort Smith, Ark.

Much of what has been accomplished in the past 12 months results from the determination of local citizens in pilot counties and areas

¹ Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin.

² See appendix.

to take responsibility and work out their own problems. These local leaders deserve much of the real credit for establishing the Rural Development Program on a firm basis. They have accepted the challenge presented by this new approach to area development. They have joined with government and educational agencies to take a fresh look at their economic problems and to move forward with practical solutions.

In most rural counties where the program is centered, rural (or resource) development committees have been organized. They are made up of farm, business, civic and other leaders, with the support and assistance of government agency workers. The committees provide continuing, systematic direction for the Rural Development Program. They are unique in many areas, bringing together on a regular schedule agency personnel and individual leaders with a recognized place in the community. In the pilot counties where Rural Development Programs have already been organized, more than 1,050 private citizens are serving as members of these local steering committees.

Staffing Pilot Counties

It is, of course, government agencies in pilot counties and areas which provide most of the skilled professional and technical workers for the Rural Development Program. These agencies, with their considerable technical, financial and personnel resources, supply local development committees with the means of establishing economic improvement projects—in agriculture, industry, education, and other fields. Some agency workers are assigned full-time to the Rural Development Program; others work part-time on projects in the program.

Using funds earmarked especially for underdeveloped farming areas, State extension services have strengthened their staffs in most pilot counties. A total of 120 associate county agents or specialists have been assigned at both the State and county level. These extension workers perform two main jobs: They increase on-the-farm education among families on small farms, and they directly support county resource development committees in their economic improvement program.

During the past year, the Soil Conservation Service used 42 man-years time of conservationists and other technicians in pilot counties. Farmers Home Administration has opened full- or part-time credit offices in eight counties. State agricultural experiment stations are contributing their skills in resource surveys and studies in 45 pilot counties.

In spite of severely limited funds, employment service offices in at least seven States have made a significant contribution to the Rural Development Program, especially in the manpower and human resource surveys going forward in development counties. Many other State and Federal agencies—health departments, schools, industry development boards and agencies, adult education units, etc.—deserve the highest praise for the extra effort they are making to strengthen the Rural Development Program in these vital fields.

At the pilot county level, wherever the Rural Development Program has operated long enough to show both organizational strength and a need for specific agency services, farm and nonfarm agencies are

often adjusting and modifying their regular activities to fit more closely the work of the program. Agencies in several pilot counties, for example, have joined together, forming a committee made up of their personnel to coordinate their services and advise local leaders on technical problems of farm, industry, and community development. Such agency committees meet on regular schedule to service the Rural Development Program.

More Than 350 Projects

This new approach to the economic improvement of depressed rural areas is having a growing impact in many rural development counties and trade areas. Plans for specific development projects long dormant have been revived and given new life. Chambers of Commerce and industrial development groups have strengthened their membership and entered into closer ties with the rest of the community. Economic resources of considerable potential have been uncovered in the systematic surveys and studies going forward in a majority of counties. More than 350 new development projects in agriculture, forestry, marketing, industry promotion, health and vocational training are reported.

These projects, planned and put together at the county and area level to meet specific needs, include many different skills, and farm and nonfarm resources. They are a direct result of the interest, planning and enterprise generated by the Rural Development Program.

In Avoyelles Parish, La., for example, one community is taking the role of "demonstration community," adopting improved agricultural practices on an intensive basis.

The rural development committee in Perry County, Ind., joined with its county commissioners to put together a systematic road improvement program.

Price County, Wis., is capitalizing on peat deposits and scrub timber by introducing several new industries utilizing these raw materials.

Markets are being established for preserved foods, handicrafts and clothing made in the farm homes of Anson County, N. C.

New opportunities for vocational training in industrial arts have been developed in Macon County, Tenn.

A loading yard is being built to handle logs for paper manufacture in Chilton County, Ala.

Women leaders in Santa Fe County's (New Mexico) rural development have started a series of lectures on health throughout the farm communities.

This report is concerned in great part with a description of these and many other specific projects which are lifting the level of living—and more important the spirit and hope—of low-income farming areas taking part in the Rural Development Program.

Resource Surveys, a Starting Point

Research going forward in pilot counties of the Rural Development Program will provide a detailed picture of conditions and trends in underdeveloped rural areas. Many of the broader studies, in which personnel of State experiment stations, the Agricultural Research Service, Federal Extension Service and the Agricultural Marketing

Service have played a role, will eventually be published in one form or another.

One such study, entitled "Agriculture's Human Resources in Cherokee County" (Texas) has already been published. It discusses "trends in farm population, trends in rural nonfarm and urban areas, migration, racial composition, age distribution, education and levels of living of farm people" in the county, using graphs and narrative.

Nearly 80 surveys and studies similar to that in Cherokee County (although not always so detailed) resulting from the Rural Development Program have been reported in 45 pilot areas. For the first time in many of these rural counties all agencies and organizations have come together to take a new look at the needs and resources of people who live in the rural communities and small towns. Often with expert assistance from State educational and research agencies, these counties are using on-the-farm interviews, mail questionnaires, classroom discussions, county and State records, census reports, information available from banks and business houses to put together a comprehensive file of data for use in future development planning and the activities of both government agencies and private groups in the county.

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

Organization of the Rural Development Program has been kept flexible and decentralized as much as possible to permit the maximum of local direction and the most effective use of government and private agency services. State direction is essential. This is the goal we are working for. During the past 12 months several State-level rural development committees were formed, and those already established were strengthened and made more effective.

The series of regional rural development conferences inaugurated in mid-May at Lexington, Ky., have had excellent results in encouraging better relationships among agencies within the States concerned. These meetings bring together farm, business and church and area development leaders and county, State and Federal agency workers for intensive workshop sessions dealing with all phases of rural development. Besides the one at Lexington, regional conferences were held in Shreveport, La., and Fort Smith, Ark. Ten States taking part in the Rural Development Program sponsored these meetings, which drew nearly 1,000 agency workers and private citizens, the former representing 35 farm and nonfarm agencies.

State and Local Direction Maintained

State rural development committees consist of representatives of farm and some nonfarm government and private agencies operating in a State. These committees are usually serviced by the State extension services, which provide such necessary administration as preparation of minutes, correspondence, liaison with pilot counties, etc. The State rural development committee holds a key place in the program. It designates pilot counties, and its members coordinate the role of their agencies in the program and give guidance to county leaders in their development work.

Most counties participating in the Rural Development Program have formed their own local committees to direct development proj-

ects and resource surveys, and to formulate long-range development goals. These committees form a unique contribution of the Rural Development Program to national area development work. They bring together on a continuing, organized basis private citizens, community leaders, and government agency personnel. They are not concerned with farming only, or industrial development or education, but rather with the contribution of agriculture to the economy of the county and the need for processing and marketing facilities, off-farm jobs, and better education, which can promote efficient farming and service the farm community.

As more experience is gained with the Rural Development Program, State and local agency personnel and farm, business, credit and other leaders will be able to further strengthen program organization. In some States, more emphasis needs to be put on the potential contribution of nonfarm agencies and private organizations administering health, education, welfare and general research activities.

Principal Coordinating Committee

At the national level the Committee for RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM of Under Secretaries of the Departments of Interior; Agriculture; Commerce; Labor; and Health, Education, and Welfare; the Administrator of the Small Business Administration; and a member of the Council of Economic Advisers continues as the major coordinating group. During the past 12 months, two important additions were made: The Small Business Administrator, Wendell B. Barnes, was added to this committee, and Dean Harry J. Reed, formerly of Purdue University, accepted the position of Rural Development Program coordinator, with one of his main responsibilities being to advise the Committee for RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

Dr. Reed, in addition, will work closely with State rural development committees and the personnel of nonagricultural government agencies and departments. Administrative responsibility for the Rural Development Program remains with the Under Secretary of Agriculture, True D. Morse, who is chairman of the main committee.

Although many agencies have responsibility in the Rural Development Program, no single State agency has been singled out to take the lead. This is a deliberate policy which recognizes that the program is principally a coordination and redirection of services already in the field, and that no single agency can alone undertake the enormously complex job of farm, industry, and community development in underdeveloped rural areas.

At both the State and county level, however, the cooperative extension services are in a position to supply rural development committees with those administrative services that obviously must back up the work of planning groups. The Federal Extension Service has allocated funds to State extension services for this purpose. In Rural Development Program pilot counties, representatives of the extension service are working with rural development committees, helping them organize, encouraging local participation, providing administrative support and obtaining information for them. This is a logical step in extension's mission to improve farming and living in rural areas. State extension services are well qualified to make use of group teach-

ing techniques and to work through local leadership to gain better living in rural communities.

The program State and local leaders are putting together, with the continuing assistance of Federal agencies, will—

1. Make use of the services of already functioning agricultural and nonagricultural agencies.
2. Keep costs to a reasonable level.
3. Encourage States and counties to experiment, try new projects, adapt services to local needs.
4. Keep leadership where it belongs, in the development areas and counties.
5. Harness the great potential of local farm, business, civic and church leaders.
6. Keep the program flexible enough to allow other rural counties and areas to follow the lead and experience of pilot counties by forming their own grass-roots development program, using regular resources and services.

A TYPICAL PILOT COUNTY

The pilot county or trade area (several counties around a trading center) is the basic unit in which the Rural Development Program operates. Pilot counties are what might be called "laboratories" for the organization and promotion of balanced economic development.

They differ considerably in potential resources, crops, climate, manpower, and social conditions.

Dent County in the Missouri Ozarks has less than 1,500 farm families, on farms that are half in timber.

In Sandoval County, N. Mex., a majority of the Spanish-American farm families live on tiny plots of land and enjoy few health, education, and recreation facilities.

Stevens County, Wash., recently named to the program by the State committee, produces mainly wheat, feed grains, and hay. Many farms in the county have large acreage.

The eastern Kentucky trade area—12 counties—needs better transportation and marketing outlets. In southern West Virginia, it's increased industrialization to fill the gap left by declining farm opportunities and limited farm potential.

Development work in these and other counties and areas is planned and organized within their own boundaries. No agency or administrator imposes a program that the people do not want, and that they have no hand in originating. A detailed consideration of the plans and projects in one pilot county—Avoyelles Parish, La.—will show how this plan operates.

Avoyelles Parish might be called a typical underdeveloped rural area. It has the same economic problems that affect many other rural counties in the region: Adjustment to agricultural changes, need for industrial and other job opportunities, financing health, education and other community projects. Avoyelles is typical, also, in its Rural Development Program. Like many other pilot counties, this parish began program operations in 1957 and has now reached the point where rural development workers and committeemen have started special projects which will help local people help themselves. The program in Avoyelles Parish has begun moving from the survey and planning stage to the project stage.

Located in the east central part of Louisiana, this parish has less than half its acreage under cultivation. The rest of the land is timber and swamp, along the many rivers and bayous. There are about 4,400 farms in the parish, 70 percent of them owner-operated, nearly two-thirds selling less than \$2,500 worth of products. More than half the adults in the parish earn their living directly from farming. The percentage of young people—between the ages of 15 and 24—continues to decline.

“Lack of Attractive Employment”

Because the parish has so little industry, most of the people who don't farm, or farm part-time, work in retail stores, construction, or travel long distances to industrial jobs outside the parish. Avoyelles' situation can be summed up in the words of a leader in rural development there. “We found a lack of attractive employment, insufficient income from farming operations, and lack of recreation facilities.” Health and sanitation are also poor in some sections of the parish.

After reviewing conditions in several underdeveloped Louisiana parishes the State rural development committee in September 1956 selected Avoyelles and two other parishes for the pilot Rural Development Program. The State experiment station prepared basic economic and sociological facts for use by the parishes in planning their development work, and an extension specialist met with local groups in Avoyelles and the other “pilot” parishes to help them organize a development program.

Formal organization took place late in January when, according to the local newspaper, “extension agents, leaders from the 11 wards (districts) in the parish and representatives from agencies and organizations supporting the program” met together to select a permanent committee chairman and members from each of the districts in the parish. Louisiana's extension service employed two agents—a man and a woman—to work with the committee and also help the regular extension staff in on-the-farm education among families on small farms.

Using full-page newspaper advertisements, radio programs, newspaper stories, and speaking tours, the rural development committee and government agencies in the parish supporting its work have broadcast the story of rural development to parish people. One advertisement, paid for by businesses, civic clubs, and townships, described these specific program objectives: “Prepare complete soils map, encourage use of more fertilizer, increase size of farms where requested and possible, exploit fresh markets for Avoyelles produce, look into the possibilities of a cotton mill, exploit fence post and timber treating plants, promote Avoyelles as a sportsman's paradise.”

An indication of support given by local people to the idea of a balanced development program was a significant action of the parish government which established, furnished and staffed a separate office in the courthouse lobby for the two extension agents doing rural development work.

A Series of Balanced Projects

In the few months since organized development in Avoyelles was started, the parish committee and agency workers, combining their skills and resources, have embarked on a series of practical projects.

One rural community was chosen as a "demonstration plot in rural development." Here extension, soil conservation, trade school, and health workers have put together an intensive farm and community improvement program. A complete soil map was prepared for the community by the Soil Conservation Service. Twenty-five farm operators are receiving special guidance in such farm subjects as soil management and farm machinery. Many people in the community use cisterns for their water supply; the health department is helping them secure a more sanitary source of water.

Realizing that many health problems such as this exist in the county, rural development leaders have emphasized better health promotion. Local health workers have increased their information for the public. Using radio programs and local newspapers, they discuss immunization, water testing, and other public services aiding health. The parish rural development committee recommended a blood-typing campaign among all the people in the parish, which has now been started in the high schools.

Since the start of rural development in the parish, home demonstration clubs have put further emphasis on home gardening and food preservation. Agency workers anticipate that this modest project will produce important results in better diets and health.

On the industry development front, of such vital importance to the parish, the rural development group—committees and agency workers—have moved to utilize the area's resources in "selling" the parish and in strengthening home-grown industry.

Good possibilities exist for making the parish a "sportsman's paradise." Fishing and hunting, properly developed, can produce more income than at present. Roads in the bayou area are being improved, and local agencies have taken steps to control noxious plants that could severely harm fishlife.

Rural development workers and committeemen have made personal visits to other areas, looking into the technical requirements for establishing brick and lumber treating plants in the parish. They are now working on financing these industries, which will make use of extensive timber and brick clay deposits.

Leaders in Avoyelles know the future of their parish depends on their own imagination, on their ability to plan and work together. Through the Rural Development Program, educational and government agencies have added full- and part-time workers to help the parish committee plan and carry forward development projects—in farming, conservation, community development, vocational training, and industry. But the responsibility for development in Avoyelles—as in all pilot counties and areas—rests squarely with the local people whose prosperity and well-being depend on the productivity of their towns, farms, and industry.

THE PATTERN OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The objective of the Rural Development Program is to help people in rural counties and areas make the best use of the resources they have.

In one rural area this best use of resources may mean larger farms, operated more efficiently. In another, an increasing number of farmers who work part-time in industry and trades. In a third, specialization in a few high-grade farm or forest products with greater

emphasis on efficient, business-like marketing. There is no single answer for each underdeveloped rural area.

An objective, realistic appraisal of resources in each area, however, can point to some of the answers. In Minnesota, according to its development committee, "no attempt is made to sell or promote the area for agriculture; but the facts are presented insofar as they are available, and it is then up to the farmers to make their own decisions as to whether they want to continue in agriculture or look for other employment. . . . Too much stress cannot be put upon the goal of a better living for rural people in the area. This goal comes above agricultural promotion. . . ."

In the Rural Development Program, therefore, local leaders give high priority to expanded industry, better health and education, programs for retired rural people, and vocational training.

Improving Income From Farming

Yet there does exist in some underdeveloped rural areas large potential for strengthening family farming. Through intensive on-the-farm counseling, properly managed credit, advice on soil, woodland and water conservation and management, and help in evaluating their total resources, many families on small farms can build their operation to the point where it produces adequate income.

In evaluating the role of improved farming in better living for rural people, however, we cannot ignore other economic and social conditions in a county. If the family farmer cannot obtain enough land to build an economical unit; if patterns of land tenure restrict his operations; if industrial development is not present to relieve pressure on land in the county; if education is so inadequate that farm people cannot meet the demands of modern farming, then agency workers will often face a severe handicap in attempting to improve incomes through better farming.

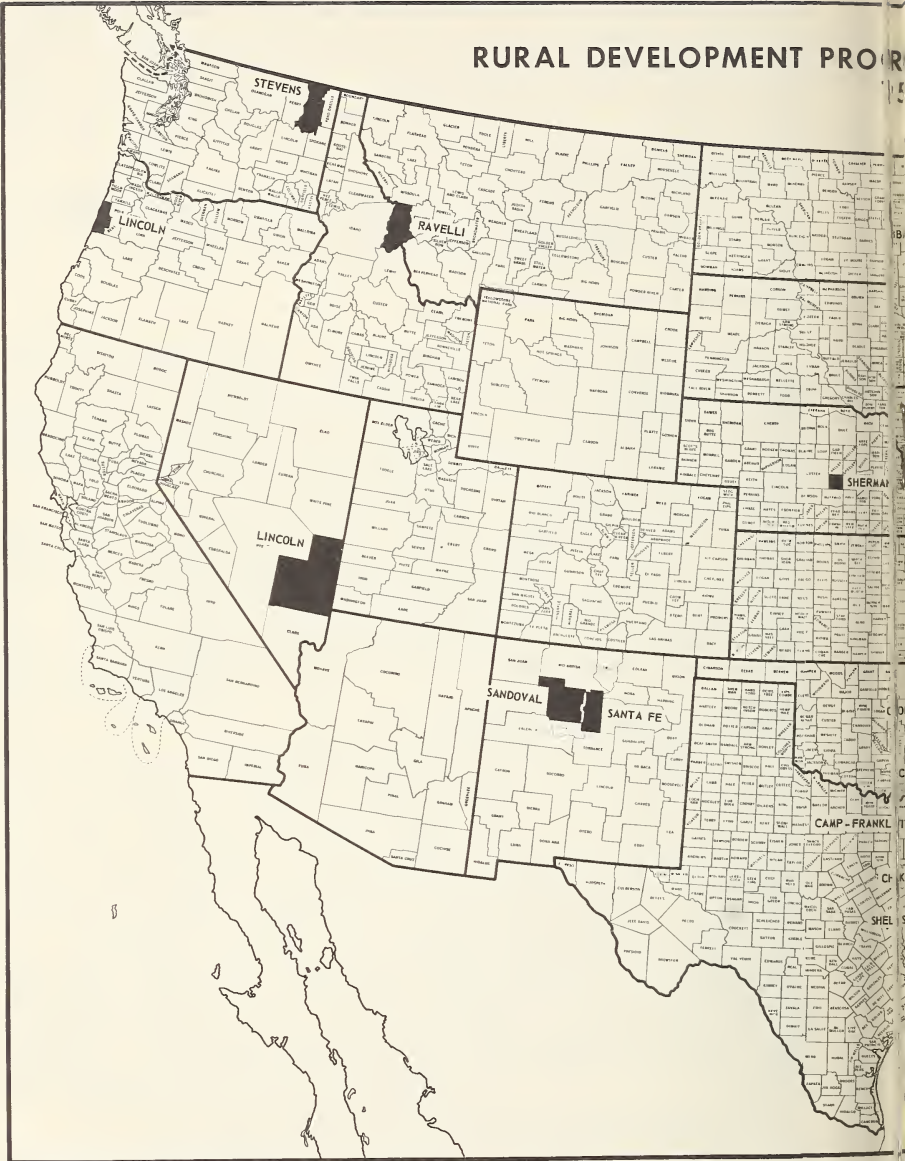
In a Southeastern pilot county, extension agents are working with a farm family that has many of the problems of farmers in underdeveloped rural areas. This family has 20 head of cattle and a few hogs on about 150 acres, 30 of which are in crops. With three children in school, the family does not earn enough from farming to maintain an adequate income or to accumulate capital for farm improvement. Neither the farmer, who works part-time on neighboring farms, nor his wife have been able to find work in industry.

In advising this family, rural development workers have emphasized limited, short-term credit to improve on-the-farm operations, and part-time work for the wife in one of the local industries. A small loan was obtained through the local Production Credit Association, the farmer is now trying to improve his crop and livestock practices, and his wife is being assisted in finding employment.

The Federal Extension Service through allocations to States has made possible an intensive program of work with such families in many pilot areas. We have already referred to the "pilot" community project in Avoyelles Parish, La. There are many others.

The isolated rural community of Canada de Los Alamos in New Mexico's Santa Fe County has gained new vigor since being designated a special project in rural development. Without electricity or pumped water, this little community of 14 farm families was cut off from any source of improvement until the pilot county leaders stepped

RURAL DEVELOPMENT PRO

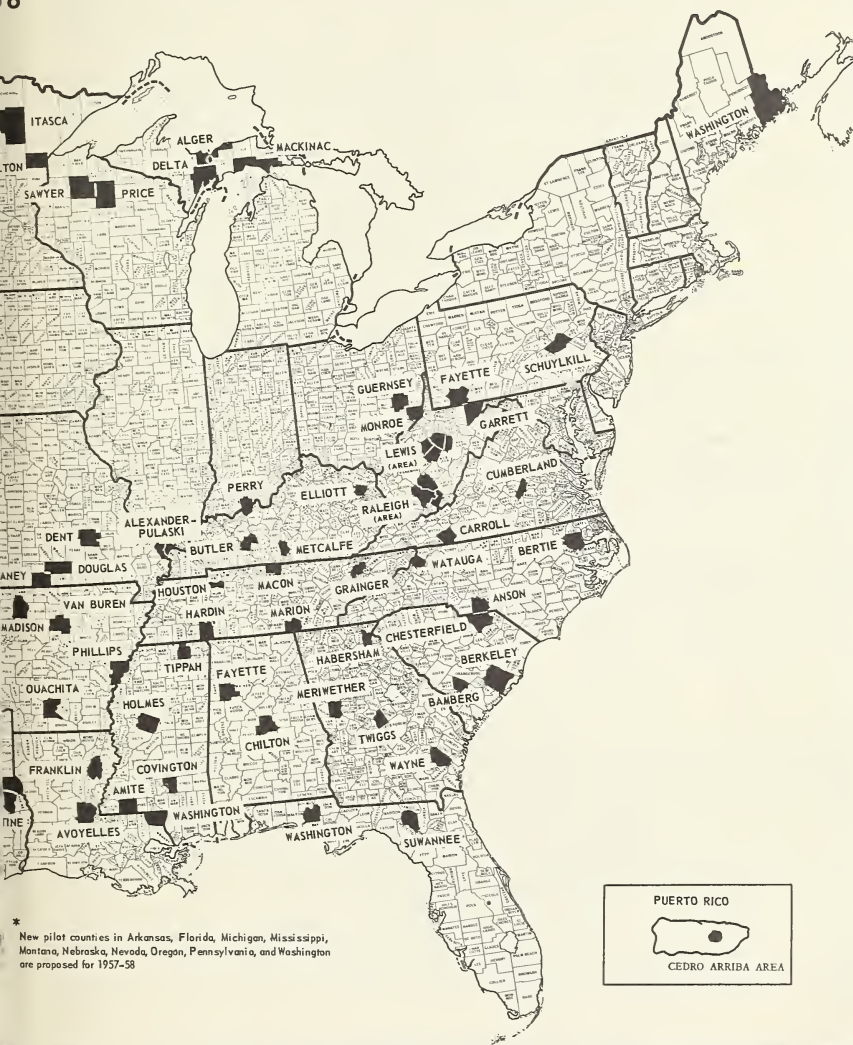


U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

SEP

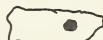
PILOT COUNTIES AND AREAS *

8



* New pilot counties in Arkansas, Florida, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Washington are proposed for 1957-58

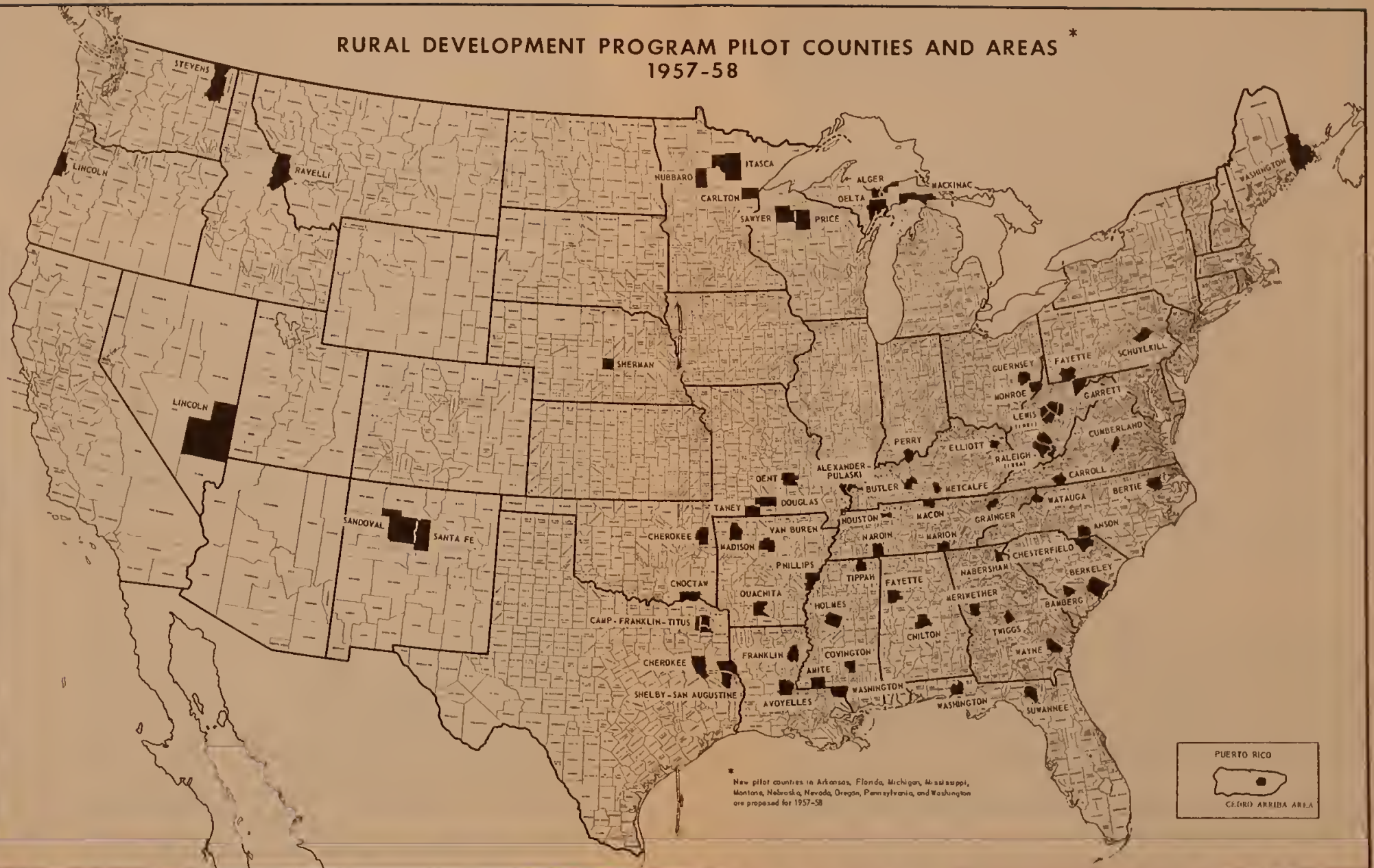
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RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM PILOT COUNTIES AND AREAS * 1957-58



U S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

SEPTEMBER 1957

OFFICE OF INFORMATION

in. A health project has been approved which will give the community a regular water supply, and the local public service company is surveying the cost of power line construction to the little community.

In South Carolina's Bamberg County, rural development committees and workers have joined with Grange leaders in the Little Swamp community to gain these objectives: help families on small farms find ways of increasing their incomes, rebuild the community center, pave mail and school bus roads, improve the water supply through well digging, and promote better marketing.

About two-fifths of the farms in Southern Illinois' Alexander-Pulaski County pilot area sell less than \$2,500 worth of products each year. Rural development there has started with intensive community-wide improvement in three priority farm communities. Workers met with community leaders to acquaint them with the program, then contacted many of the farmers to talk over their needs and prospects. After completing land mapping in three communities, a soil scientist, assigned to rural development, explained soil types and farm plans at farmer meetings. This is a first step. In coming months, on-farm assistance will be increased in these communities, and more guidance in home and garden management will be available there.

Besides working on a community-wide basis, rural development committees and supporting workers are pushing special crops and practices to raise incomes on small farms. More than 125 crop and livestock projects have been started in recent months in pilot counties.

A good example is Hardin County, Tenn., where farmers in one of the lowest income communities have added several thousand dollars to their incomes by growing pimiento peppers. The county vocational agriculture supervisor and his staff aided these farmers by holding classes in proper cultivation, grading, and marketing. The community had never before produced truck crops for sale.

In Sawyer County, Wis., which started its program only recently, rural development workers see good prospects for production and sale of wild rice. The sixty acre area already seeded will be expanded.

Livestock has a central place in the agricultural development plans of pilot county and area leadership. A trade-day awards program was organized in Tippah County, Miss., with a registered Jersey cow as first prize. Local businessmen finance the contest, which has already placed 19 Jerseys with farmers in the county. Chesterfield County, S. C., rural development workers plan to promote increased poultry and swine production on small farms and to work closely with farm operators in their new enterprise.

Twelve farmers in Lewis County, W. Va., joined a sheep-raising project by pasturing 146 western ewes on their land. They have already earned enough from lambs and wool to pay back the loan which made the project possible.

Efficient Marketing, Part of the Farm Improvement Job

Rural development committees in many counties and agencies working with them place a great deal of emphasis on one part of the farm development job that has too often had low priority—efficient farm product marketing. An indication of the importance they attach to the total marketing job in bringing higher returns to farm

families can be seen in the wide variety of marketing projects that have been started in pilot counties.

Kentucky is operating rural development on a trade area basis, an approach well adapted to improved marketing since many counties can supply products. Lawrence County, in the Ashland, or eastern trade area, has been selected as the site of a new sorghum processing mill, which will absorb production from several surrounding counties. The mill should increase farm income about \$75,000 in the multi-county area.

In Summers County, W. Va., which has also organized a trade area development program, several important marketing projects are under way. With local railroads building loading pens and supplying scales, a lamb pool was organized to serve as an area-wide market. Members of the county development committee bought two small tomato canneries, the machinery of which will be combined and placed in one refurnished building. And the local farmer's market has been reorganized to an auction-type market, which will put its operators in a better position to help farmers in their marketing.

Securing a fair price and a steady market for berry production was a serious marketing problem in Chilton County, Ala. Members of the rural development committee, extension service, and specialists from the State experiment station met together on the problem with managers of the local farmers co-op. They made surveys of prices received elsewhere for berries, amount sold, and expected volume. They also sent representatives outside the county to gain first-hand information on markets and prices. This effort, preceding actual harvesting of berries in the county, has helped farmers receive a better price for their crop, and should pay even larger dividends in future years.

These and other marketing projects in pilot counties—more than 37 have been reported in recent months—should point the way to better, more efficient marketing methods using local resources, leadership, and agency services.

Importance of Off-Farm Work

Speaking before the first regional conference on rural development at the University of Kentucky, May 15, 1957, Con Welch, a Hardin County, Tenn., banker and chairman of the county rural development committee, expressed the belief of many program leaders when he said, "Our problem is primarily one of agriculture, but one which will not be solved by an agricultural approach alone, and the area which approaches the solution of this problem by strictly agricultural means is doomed to failure from the start." And in an address before the third regional conference on rural development in Fort Smith, Arkansas, June 20, Dr. Randle T. Klemme, Director of the Oklahoma State Department of Commerce and Industry, pointed out, "The history of the splendid work which has been done by State and Federal agencies designed to increase agricultural income over the years, in the face of the continued persistence of low income farms, indicates that the solution to the problem that we are discussing is to be found outside the realm of agriculture itself. What we are discussing is the problem of underemployment of human resources and the solution must lie in the creation of additional or supplemental economic opportunities."

Industrial development in farming areas probably represents the most difficult part of a balanced development program. It depends greatly on manpower and resource conditions built up over a long period of time. Insufficient education or education not adapted to the needs of industry, poor roads, communication and public facilities to name a few, may serve to discourage industrial development. In addition, the extensive technical and advisory services available to commercial farmers have no parallel in the community business and industry field. Cities and the more prosperous rural areas can hire skilled managers to promote business and industry and give technical advice to local businessmen. But this road may not be open to underdeveloped rural areas where the tax base is small and the public budget limited.

For the reason that industry development does present such a complex problem in low-income rural areas, we are particularly interested in the experience of rural development pilot counties which have set out to permanently strengthen their industrial base, using their own resources and the skills of industry groups and rural development workers.

What they are doing and the methods they use have importance for rural areas throughout the nation.

Industry Balances Agriculture

Price County, Wis., a pilot county in the northern part of that State, has good industry potential, and the "resource development committee" is waging an organized campaign to make the best use of county resources. As in many underdeveloped rural areas, forests and recreation areas can be utilized more effectively to increase income.

Price County's drive for more job opportunities is built around industry development groups in each village and town. Working together and helping each other with advice and encouragement, these groups have generated so many ideas, according to an extension worker in the county, that "if all of them were carried out we would have several industries for every community in the county." He gives this illustration, "At one of our early meetings one of the men said, 'What are our resources? We've got a lot of swamp and a lot of stones.' Following up on this, we now have at least two people that are interested in commercializing on large deposits of peat which we have in our area. And there are two plants in the county now producing charcoal which use wood that otherwise would be wasted."

Because development leadership was on hand and ready to lend assistance, one of the Price County communities retained a small business which wanted to expand and was about to move outside the area. A local plant making ground wood fiber is going into hard-board production, assisted by financing from one of the communities. With help from the county resource development group, another small business manufacturing fish lures plans expansion.

Other local rural development committees are putting a great deal of time and effort into their industry and business promotion. These are some of the representative projects started in recent months:

In Taney County, Mo., the subcommittee on industry (part of the rural development committee) has organized an industrial improvement association and sold memberships to businessmen and others in the county. Money raised by the association will pay for direct mail

and magazine advertising, promoting county resources and the travel expenses of county representatives.

Texas' Rural Development Program operates on an area as well as a county basis. In the Camp-Franklin-Titus (three-county) area, where several new plants have been established recently, more than 50 percent of the rural family heads already work full-time in industry. A new poultry processing plant recently put in operation has already increased employment in other enterprises, including the local ice plant where five workers were added to meet demands of the processing operation.

An example of economic development which provides new employment while directly helping farmers comes from Holmes County, a pilot county in Mississippi. Through the planning and enterprise of the rural development committee, a 100,000-bushel grain elevator and feed mill was organized and financed. Now under construction in the county, the new cooperatively owned enterprise will provide a market for all grains grown in the area.

Many farm women in Anson County, N. C., were interested in making clothes at home for sale in local stores. At the suggestion of rural development committee members, a local clothing store has agreed to serve as an outlet for these goods. Other markets are being developed outside the county not only for clothing produced by Anson's farm wives, but also for handicrafts and foods.

As a first step toward industry development, the Carroll County, Va., development committee has taken direction of surveys dealing with industrial sites and manpower in the county. Committee members have received technical assistance in this project from the Virginia Division of Planning and Economic Development. Recently an industrial land corporation in the county raised \$15,000 to purchase land for an industrial park.

Virginia's other pilot county, Cumberland, will soon issue a brochure containing basic information on the county, its people, and the resources of interest to prospective industry. The rural development committee put together facts for this publication, and the Virginia Electric and Power Company will publish it.

An Oklahoma County's Record

Until a few years ago, industry in eastern Oklahoma's Choctaw County was limited to a few small sawmills and a railroad yard. Lack of industry and one-crop farming combined to hobble the economic life of the county. Schools, health facilities, roads, and the steady stream of people leaving the county all reflected a depressed, unstable economy.

Choctaw County, now one of the two Oklahoma development pilot counties, has truly pulled itself up by the bootstraps during the past few years. A remarkable job of industry and business development has been accomplished by the local Chamber of Commerce, and in the last 2 years by agricultural and other leaders working with the Rural Development Program. Canneries, grade-A dairies, several wood-working plants, a feed mill, and a large-scale glove factory have all been added during the past few years, strengthening the county's economic life. By directing and promoting such projects as locally financed plant construction for the glove manufacturer. Choctaw's Chamber of Commerce and other development leaders working with

the Chamber have literally remade their county. More than one million dollars' worth of school, home, road, and community building is now under way in the county.

Increased Emphasis on Forestry

State and county rural development leaders, using the resources of such agencies as the United States Forest Service, State forest services, and the Soil Conservation Service, are trying to develop strengthened forest product industries in many places, and 25 forestry projects are under way as a result of rural development.

They approach forestry as an interconnected farm and industry development. For example, in Chilton County, Ala., where three-fourths of the land is in forest, local committees have helped establish several wood-using industries and markets, at the same time conducting educational meetings for farmers owning forest land. The forestry group in the county program contacted several charcoal manufacturers, one of which has already established in the county. A yard is being constructed to handle logs for paper manufacture and, with assistance from the forestry rural development group, another forest product industry secured a favorable site for its new plant.

An illustration of cooperation among different agencies and groups to carry out a rural development project in forest development comes from Arkansas. There representatives of the State industrial research center, the extension service, and the State forest service provided technical aid to the rural development committee in Van Buren County as the latter conducted a forest survey and made plans for better use of forest resources.

Rural Manpower Surveys

In evaluating an area, industry looks for raw materials, good community relations, water, and power facilities. But above all, industry is interested in an adequate supply of manpower with necessary skills or potential for training.

One of the most important projects going forward in rural development counties and areas is a detailed study of rural manpower, its skills and availability for work in trades and industry. Employment services in several States have assisted local rural development leaders in preparing their survey forms and questionnaires and also instructed them in survey techniques.

Often these manpower studies are the result of cooperation among several agencies. Last January and February, as an illustration, workers from the Arkansas Department of Labor, State extension service, and the University of Arkansas' department of agricultural economics cooperated in labor surveys conducted in all three of the State's pilot counties. Nearly 1,000 farm families in the 3 counties were interviewed. Results now being tabulated by Arkansas University's department of agricultural economics should give an accurate picture of need for off-farm incomes. Rural development committeemen and workers in the three counties will use information from the extensive surveys in their planning. And businessmen interested in these Arkansas areas for possible plant location will have a clearer picture of labor skills and potential.

Several surveys and research studies which rural development committees and agency workers have completed indicate a definite need

for more vocational training among both school youth and young adults. A number of States—Louisiana and North Carolina are outstanding examples—have taken steps to increase and improve vocational training in industrial skills, trades, merchandising, and office procedures. By investing now in the development of their human resources, the one absolutely essential factor in any development program, these States are providing for their future prosperity.

Reevaluating Vocational Training

Sometimes with the aid of State vocational training departments, sometimes using their own local skills and resources, several rural development pilot counties have also moved to help their young people gain more opportunity to learn a trade.

Macon County, Tenn., where there's one farm opportunity for every five boys graduating from high school, is a typical example. According to a rural development leader in the county, this is what was done to open additional training opportunities: "Our schools were very crowded and there was no room for an additional (vocational training) class, so we had to build a building. The county board of education gave five 1-room rural school buildings left vacant by school consolidation. Some of the buildings were sold and the money used to buy cement and concrete blocks; others were brought into town and used for the framing, roof, doors, windows by the boys taking the trades course."

The Wisconsin legislature recently passed a bill to help rural areas obtain vocational trade schools, which in the past were limited to cities of more than 5,000 people. Price County resource development committeemen working on education helped gain support for the bill while it was still in the discussion stage. Price's education group also used information obtained in county resource surveys to inform Wisconsin legislators as they considered several other measures improving education facilities in rural areas.

Rural development means more to the young people in a community than to any other single group. Good basic education and training adapted to the career needs of youth together with economic opportunity can spell the difference between continuing poverty and sound progress in a rural area.

Better Health, a Goal in Many Areas

Reviewing its personnel and workload for the information of the county rural development committee, the health department in a South Carolina pilot county reported it needed at least seven additional professional workers, including a nurse, a dentist, and a mental health worker. This same county found that in one small rural community alone 13 school-age children had dental, medical, or mental health problems requiring professional service.

Not all rural areas where incomes are low face such critical health problems. However, everyone with experience in these areas will agree that development of the individual, and of the community as a whole, is often retarded by chronically poor health and nutrition. An illustration of this comes from a Tennessee mountain county, one of the first to organize a Rural Development Program. Some rural school children in the county seemed unable to study their lessons in the morning school session. On investigating, workers found that

many of the children were coming to school without breakfast. In-school food programs were started in the county.

Rural health depends on many factors, such as proper diets, sanitation, access to health education, attitudes, etc. Members of rural development committees concerned with better health in pilot areas have inaugurated a variety of health projects, in close cooperation with local health departments and private doctors.

Each of the 25 counties participating in Kentucky's rural area development program has established a health leadership group within the county program. Some of their achievements:

Town-country clean up campaigns in six counties resulted in construction of permanent garbage disposal facilities.

Elliott County rural development sponsored a county-wide drive to increase polio vaccination among children. Eighty percent of the children have been vaccinated.

Rural development committees in the three centrally located pilot counties spearheaded a drive to collect the local contribution for health centers, which will be financed mainly through Federal-State cost-sharing.

The rural development committee and a civic club in Magoffin County combined their efforts to build a swimming pool and a recreation center.

Another county in New Mexico—Santa Fe—organized a health and nutrition committee of women taking part in rural development. Using facts gathered in a county-wide health survey to help in planning programs, this committee held health education meetings in all rural communities. The local public health department supplied speakers for these meetings.

Health specialists employed by the Indiana Board of Health and the State extension service have helped development leaders in Perry County plan a county-wide health survey, which is now in process. This survey also has assistance from home demonstration clubs and the county health council.

Rural Development Program counties report a total of 62 health projects and studies similar to those in Kentucky, New Mexico, and Indiana.

Education for Rural Development

A significant first step in area development—and one that can well be the most important of all—is to get people interested in the development program, discussing its possibilities, and willing to do what they can to make it a success. Rural development committees put this objective high on their list. They use all the regular local news media—newspapers, radio and TV stations, and magazines—to tell the story of rural development.

They have also adopted some unique approaches to publicizing their development programs. A Kentucky pilot county started essay contests in high schools to get students interested in the program and thinking about economic improvement. Another county has invited high school students to select a representative to serve on the rural development committee. Rural development workers in Anson County, N. C., have put together a series of slide films to illustrate talks on the program.

Rural development leaders in Summers County, located in West Virginia's southern pilot area, have put into operation a systematic program of rural development "education" which includes:

Radio—the twice-a-day farm radio program carries regular news of rural development.

TV—four ½-hour television programs explaining rural development were presented in recent months.

Newspapers—the local paper features a weekly news article on rural development, and notices of program meetings and activities are printed regularly.

Program information is a two-way street, as many pilot counties prove by organizing channels of communication from families on small farms to rural development committeemen and workers, as well as in the opposite direction. The county agent in Arkansas' Phillips County explains this. "Early in May 1957," he reports, "five communities were designated. These communities were set up by the steering committee for research and study. Three of these are all Negro communities, and two are white communities. The first meeting was held at Southland (one of the communities) on May 28, 1957. The purpose of this meeting was to learn the problems as expressed by the people. All 38 people invited were present. Each person expressed his own ideas. And the entire meeting was recorded on tape and transcribed later for the rural development steering committee to study."

AGENCIES IN THE PROGRAM

We have referred to several development projects and resource surveys which are receiving special attention from government and educational agencies. In summary, here is a list of agencies that have made a major contribution to local rural development committees in their organization, planning, and program implementation:

AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATIONS. All States taking part in the Rural Development Program make use of the technical services and the research skills of the agricultural experiment stations to forward the aims of pilot county development. Marketing specialists, economists, rural sociologists, and others are participating in the program as the need arises. One of the most important contributions of experiment stations is technical assistance in the planning and preparation of surveys and other research in pilot counties, tabulation, and publication of results.

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE. This USDA agency has joined with experiment stations of the agricultural colleges in 17 States in cooperative studies concerning production, incomes, resources, and economic development problems in low-income farming areas. Twelve colleges are doing cooperative research with ARS in areas which encompass Rural Development Program pilot counties. Several nation-wide studies are also under way. These include analyses of farm resource requirements for specified levels of incomes, and of the progress and problems of Farmers Home Administration borrowers. During the past year ARS has completed studies of trends in the numbers and characteristics of low-income and other classes of farms; comparative incomes of farm and nonfarm families; and the characteristics of part-time farmers.

AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE is cooperating with agricultural colleges in 10 States to forward studies dealing with farm family living, education, out-migration, health in underdevel-

oped farming areas. Several of these studies are centered in pilot counties. During the past year, AMS also produced important aids for program leaders in pilot counties, including a report on potential industries in low-income rural areas and a guide for survey making and fact finding.

AGRICULTURAL STABILIZATION AND CONSERVATION COMMITTEES. In several States, ASC committees have increased the amount of funds available for conservation work on small farms in pilot counties. At the county level, ASC committees have one or more members on most rural development committees, and in several cases have adjusted rates of cost sharing for conservation practices to meet the special needs of farmers taking part in rural development.

COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY. In at least six States, representatives of State agencies concerned with development of commerce and industry have met with program committees in pilot counties and are providing continuing assistance in their industry and business promotion.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICES. Using funds allocated by the FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE, State extension directors have staffed the rural development programs at the State level with 120 associate county agents or specialists, most of whom are employed in pilot counties. In addition, other extension personnel in almost all States devote a significant amount of time to supporting administration of the program and coordination of agency services.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS. Special projects to improve general education and vocational training are part of the Rural Development Program in at least 15 pilot counties. Representatives of State education departments are members of 19 State rural development committees. In several States, other education personnel have been assigned part-time to the program. In the counties, school board members and teachers participate in several programs as members of development committees.

EMPLOYMENT SECURITY AGENCIES. These State agencies, responsible for broad programs in the employment and manpower fields, are assisting in many of the labor market surveys going forward in pilot counties. They have supplied personnel and technical information in the preparation of questionnaires and tabulation of results.

FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION. During the past 12 months, FHA has operated with new authority to make loans to farmers working part-time off their farms. As of June 30, 1957, three thousand two hundred and sixty operating loans and 1,150 real estate loans had been made to part-time farmers. This agency also strengthened its program of credit service in 16 Rural Development Program counties.

HEALTH DEPARTMENTS. State health officials are represented on rural development committees in 15 States and have participated in the program planning sessions there. Sixteen States report special health projects in pilot areas; most of these have the assistance of local health personnel.

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS. County commissioners and other local government agencies in more than half the 30 States going for-

ward with rural development have allocated local funds for office expenses and clerical assistance for special program workers.

OFFICE OF AREA DEVELOPMENT. A U. S. Department of Commerce agency assisting both urban and rural communities in strengthening their industrial and business economy, the Office of Area Development has assigned technical personnel to cooperate with the Department of Agriculture and State rural development committees in the industry phase of rural development. They have met with many State leaders in the program and supplied technical publications to pilot counties.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE. In addition to the summary of health conditions in Rural Development Program pilot counties cited below, the U. S. Public Health Service is preparing a suggested guide, "County X Takes A Step Toward Local Health Planning," for possible use in these areas. The suggested method of fact-finding can be applied in any county where people are interested in determining their local situation as a basis for health planning.

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION. Representatives of this U. S. agency have met with Rural Development Program workers in nine States and have discussed their credit and technical assistance programs with county and area groups. During the past 12 months, this agency made many loans to small businessmen in rural areas.

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE. This USDA agency has used 42 man-years for rural development in 53 pilot counties and areas. Three thousand three hundred farms in the program area have received on-site help; soil mapping has been completed on 442,000 acres during the past year.

STATE FOREST SERVICES are supplying technical advice and assistance to rural development committees, farmers, and program workers in 38 pilot areas, for both improved farm forest management and development of forest industries and products. Farm foresters are being employed in cooperation with the U. S. FOREST SERVICE to help in additional pilot counties. The FOREST SERVICE is encouraging agencies to use the Rural Development Program as an important new instrument of forestry improvement, utilization, and marketing and recently prepared a publication specifically for use in rural development forestry projects.

Other U. S. Government agencies, using their regular operating channels and services, have made a special effort to strengthen the Rural Development Program at State and local levels and to improve interagency coordination. The following is a complete list of all operating agencies taking part:

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE: Office of Area Development

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE: Agricultural Research Service, Farmers Home Administration, Agricultural Conservation Program Service, Soil Conservation Service, Federal Extension Service, Forest Service, Agricultural Marketing Service, Rural Electrification Administration, Farmer Cooperative Service, Commodity Stabilization Service

FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR: Bureau of Employment Security

TO IMPROVE SERVICES FOR RURAL AREAS

Through the work of government agencies, private organizations, businesses, and other groups contributing to the Rural Development Program, we have been able to gain new insight into the problems of low-income rural areas, and to better understand what these areas have to work with and what they need if their levels of living are to move upward with those of other areas in the Nation.

Surveys in pilot counties and the experience to date of workers and local citizens who plan and direct development projects provide us with a unique opportunity to learn more about real conditions and needs in low-income farming areas. We are putting together a file of reports from the grass roots which will be useful in many programs and projects of Federal agencies operating in the fields of economic, social, and educational development.

On the basis of preliminary work in pilot counties and areas and the considerable body of information gathered in studies already made there, we can attempt to draw certain general conclusions about public programs and services affecting these areas.

Technical Aid in Industry Development

A major problem in rural areas of low income is diversification of economic endeavor so that people will not be dependent on one crop or one type of industry. Undoubtedly a few rural areas exist where the development of industry, other than forestry, is a near impossibility. But many other areas have considerable potential for manufacturing, farm product processing, handicrafts, and other activities that would relieve the pressure of people on land and protect them from the effects of fluctuations in a single market.

To help meet this need, we should strengthen and greatly increase the technical assistance available to local communities in the assessment of their resources and the development of manufacturing facilities. At present, State industrial development boards and agencies, employment security agencies, the Small Business Administration, the United States Commerce and Labor Departments, and to a limited extent, the Department of Agriculture administer programs including this kind of technical assistance. Numerous private organizations and groups, Chambers of Commerce, railroads, real estate companies, power and light companies also help local communities in promoting industry and business.

However, the amount of assistance available for this kind of work often does not reach into the very areas that need it most. In many cases, such assistance is neither systematic nor thorough, because development agencies, both public and private, do not have the resources to make on-the-ground surveys and studies leading to practical advice tailored to the industry development needs of specific areas.

It would seem wise public policy on the part of government agencies and sound business practice on the part of companies and organizations to give high priority to the development of manufacturing, marketing and processing facilities in rural areas where the potential

exists. This would strengthen the entire national economy, improve the living standards of many of our people, and help realize the national defense goal of industry dispersion.

Information on Rural Employment Needs

As of March 1957, the U. S. Department of Labor had classified 19 major labor market areas and 59 minor areas in the Nation as having substantial labor surpluses. Average unemployment in these 78 labor market areas was above nine percent of the total labor force. These "depressed industrial areas" thus became eligible for preferential treatment in Federal procurement, rapid tax amortization, and certain other benefits. As a recent report of the House Committee on Banking and Currency put it, "The labor market area classification program is the basic tool for identifying areas in which relatively heavy unemployment exists."

Low-income rural areas do not rank high by customary measures of unemployment, but *underemployment* is widespread. A West Virginia pilot county in the Rural Development Program, for example, found through its surveys nearly 1,500 adults on small farms who wanted off-farm employment. Yet only 90 unemployed were listed in the county labor office. If those farm people who now do productive work for less than half the year are able to find supplementary employment, they will both improve their own status and also help enlarge the Nation's output. There is a need for more accurate information, nationwide, on labor availability and job requirements in low-income rural areas.

Vocational Training Pointed to Jobs

Evidence from the pilot counties and areas participating in the Rural Development Program leads to the further conclusion that vocational education for nonfarming employment should be greatly extended.

Vocational training in agriculture for high school students with its accompanying youth activities has proved a sound educational investment. Vocational education in agriculture for young and adult farmers has helped them solve their problems and thereby improve their income and scale of living, and it has an important role in the improvements that are needed in low-income rural areas. But in many such areas, youth and adults do not have the opportunity for vocational training to prepare for either farming or nonfarm employment because the communities do not have the resources and facilities to provide the training that is needed.

An impressive illustration of a need for expansion of public vocational training programs comes from one of the rural development counties in Texas. There, interviewers talked with youth, asking their opinions about education in the county. According to the report of the interviewers, the students revealed favorable reaction to vocational agriculture programs. However, regardless of their personal feelings toward this program of vocational training, they expressed a strong opinion that vocational education should include more courses and instruction to prepare for employment in trades, industry, distributive and office occupations. Many did not plan to farm and wondered why they were not taught courses to prepare them for non-farm employment.

This report from a Texas county is typical of many reports concerning the need for broadened vocational training. In some cases, rural county leaders did not themselves realize the large number of young people who wanted off-farm employment and training that would prepare them for such employment. Basic educational surveys, part of preliminary rural development planning, are making this plainly evident in many areas.

Pilot Health Projects

The Public Health Service, cooperating with the U. S. Department of Agriculture, has prepared a brief summary of health conditions in pilot areas. These counties have on the average only about half as many physicians, dentists, and nurses per 100,000 population as the average for all counties in the Nation. Health department staffs are also deficient, compared with all counties having organized local public health services.

Reports we are receiving from pilot counties in the Rural Development Program put these statistics into concrete terms. One county describes its need for a full-time dentist. Another has started a project to build a clinic. A third is trying to get a full-time public health nurse. Several other States and areas within States have attempted to set up special projects that would help isolated rural communities obtain more adequate health services.

This is a fertile field for experimentation and "pilot programs." Many counties do not have within their own boundaries the resources or the population to support all the health services that may sometime be needed by local residents. The Rural Development Program offers a unique opportunity to health agencies at all levels to assist in reviewing the problems of underdeveloped rural areas, and to make special contributions to planning and action that will help to solve specific problems in pilot counties and will also point the way to improved service and better techniques in other rural areas.

To acknowledge that adjustments and changes could profitably be made in certain public programs is not to deny the primary responsibility of local areas for positive action to help themselves. As this report makes vividly clear, there is a tremendous store of initiative and enterprise among leaders in underdeveloped rural areas. Almost unlimited possibilities exist for practical projects in farm development, industrialization, resource improvement, health, education, welfare, and vocational training, which can be planned and carried forward using the leadership, agency personnel, and resources of the local community.

The Rural Development Program in the short time it has been operating provides conclusive evidence that rural counties and trade areas can "pull themselves up by their bootstraps." Through organization, long-range planning, and continuing development leadership, levels of living can be raised. It is a great tragedy for the people of any area to resign themselves to economic stagnation and permanently depressed living conditions. A determination to do something about economic and social problems is the key that can open many doors to people in such rural counties. The impressive list of projects described in this report is proof of this.

Appendix I

PILOT COUNTIES AND AREAS IN THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, 1957-58

(NOTE : Counties listed in *italics* are new pilot counties proposed for 1957-58.)

Alabama	Minnesota	South Carolina
Chilton	Carlton	Berkeley
Fayette	Hubbard	Chesterfield
Arkansas	Itasca	Bamberg
Ouachita	Mississippi	Tennessee
Phillips	<i>Amite</i>	Grainger
Van Buren	Covington	Hardin
<i>Madison</i>	Holmes	Houston
Florida	Tippah	Macon
<i>Suwannee</i>	Missouri	Marion
<i>Washington</i>	Dent	Texas
Georgia	Douglas	Camp-Franklin-Titus
Habersham	Taney	Area
Meriwether	Montana	Cherokee
Twiggs	<i>Ravalli</i>	Shelby-San Augustine
Wayne	Nebraska	Area
Illinois	<i>Sherman</i>	Virginia
Alexander-Pulaski	Nevada	Carroll
Area	<i>Lincoln</i>	Cumberland
Indiana	New Mexico	Washington
Perry	Sandoval	Stevens
Kentucky	Santa Fe	West Virginia
Butler*	North Carolina	Lewis*
Elliott*	Anson	Raleigh*
Metcalfe*	Bertie	Wisconsin
Louisiana	Watauga	Price
Avoyelles	Ohio	Sawyer
Franklin	Guernsey	Commonwealth of
Washington	Monroe	Puerto-Rico
Maine	Oklahoma	<i>Cedro Arriba Area</i>
Washington	Cherokee	
Maryland	Choctaw	
Garrett	Oregon	
Michigan	<i>Lincoln</i>	
<i>Alger</i>	Pennsylvania	
Delta	Fayette	
Mackinac	<i>Schuylkill</i>	

*Area Center.

Appendix II
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
*Appropriations for the Rural Development Program, Fiscal Years
 1957 and 1958*

	1957 Appropriations	1958	
		Budget estimates	Appropriations
<i>Farmers' Home Administration:</i>			
Authorization for farm operating loans.....	\$15, 000, 000	\$15, 000, 000	\$15, 000, 000
Salaries and expenses.....	369, 750	387, 242	387, 242
<i>Extension Service:</i>			
Payments to States.....	640, 000	1, 940, 000	890, 000
Retirement costs for extension agents.....		95, 836	43, 966
<i>Soil Conservation Service:</i>			
Conservation operations.....	477, 600	897, 100	665, 100
<i>Agricultural Marketing Service:</i>			
Marketing research and service....	152, 200	159, 870	159, 870
<i>Agricultural Research Service:</i>			
Farm and household economic research.....	404, 300	424, 700	424, 700
<i>Office of Information:</i>			
Special information materials.....	8, 300	30, 072	8, 729
<i>Office of the Secretary:</i>			
Overall program coordination.....	9, 495	20, 900	9, 735
Totals:			
Direct appropriations.....	2, 061, 645	3, 955, 720	2, 589, 342
Loan authorizations.....	15, 000, 000	15, 000, 000	15, 000, 000